

What is claimed is:

1. Computer apparatus for information retrieval, comprising:

- a. a bus;
  - b. information storage accessible through said bus;
  - 5 c. a communications interface connected to said bus;
- and

d. a processor connected to said bus, said processor configured to receive search queries over said communications interface, to process those queries against information stored in information storage, and to provide a list of terms used in search queries presented over a period of time to be selectively added to information stored in information storage.

2. Apparatus of claim 1 in which a term to be selectively added is added to a document or file as a meta-tag.

3. Apparatus of claim 2 in which a term to be selectively added is also added to an inverted index.

4. An information retrieval system, comprising:  
a. a network;

b. a plurality of users connected to said network.;  
and

5           c. at least one server connected to said network,  
said server providing search access to a plurality of  
documents and files stored on said server in response to  
search queries submitted by users, said server configured  
to provide a list of terms used in search queries over a  
10       period of time to be selectively added to information  
stored in information storage.

5.   Apparatus of claim 4 in which a term to be  
selectively added is added to a document or file as a  
meta-tag.

6.   Apparatus of claim 5 in which a term to be  
selectively added is also added to an inverted index.

7.   A method of enhancing information retrieval in  
an information retrieval system, comprising the steps of:

a. providing an element for storing a list of  
queries submitted to a search engine;

5       b. providing an element for storing a list of terms  
used in those queries together with frequency of  
occurrence, and

c. providing an element for selecting at least a  
portion of relatively high frequency search terms and

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a. providing an element for storing a list of terms used in queries together with frequency of occurrence, and

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a. providing an element for generating a master term database of terms used in queries received by said information retrieval system over a period of time,

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10           c. using said master term list and said new term  
list as a source of terms for adding to documents  
containing those terms as a meta-tag.

15.   The method of claim 14 in which at least one  
term selected from terms from said master term list is  
used to identify documents or files containing said term  
to which said term may be added as a meta-tag.

16.   The method of claim 14 in which at least one  
term selected from terms from said master term list is  
used to identify only documents or files containing said  
term which have been created or modified since the last  
5   time the master term list was used to identify documents  
or files, to which said term may be added as a meta-tag.

17.   The method of claim 15 in which said new term  
database is used to identify documents or files  
containing said term to which said term may be added as  
a meta-tag.

18.   A method of enhancing information retrieval in  
an information retrieval system, comprising the steps of:

5       a. providing an element for sorting query terms  
presented to the information retrieval system by  
frequency of occurrence; to provide a term list;

b. eliminating noise words and stop words from the term list;

c. selecting a portion of said term list containing the highest frequency terms; and

10 d. processing those highest frequency terms as candidates for inclusion in documents or files containing the terms as a meta-tag.

19. A method of assisting a user in indexing a document the user created, comprising the steps of:

5 a. providing an element for extracting terms used in search queries presented to a search engine over a period of time; and

b. presenting those terms to said user.

20. A method of enhancing information retrieval in an information retrieval system, comprising the steps of:

a. providing an element for identifying a document containing a term;

5 b. determining if said document contains subject matter related to said term; and

c. providing an element for adding said term to said document as a meta-tag if it does.

21. A method of operating an information retrieval system, comprising the steps of:

a. extracting terms used in search queries over a period of time;

5        b. identifying documents or files containing at least one of said terms; and

c. selectively adding said at least one of said terms to said document or file as a meta-tag.

22. The method of claim 21 in which said meta-tag is given more weight than other terms when ranking relevance of documents retrieved in response to a search query.

23. A computer program product, comprising:

a. a memory medium; and

5        b. a computer program stored on said memory medium, said computer program comprising instructions for storing a list of terms used in queries together with frequency of occurrence, and for adding at least one term selected from said list based on frequency of occurrence to at least one document containing said term as a meta-tag.

24. A computer program product, comprising:

a. a memory medium; and

5        b. a computer program stored on said memory medium, said computer program comprising instructions for generating a master term database of terms used in

queries received by an information retrieval system over a period of time, for generating a new term list of terms used in queries received by said information retrieval system during a later period of time which are not in said master term list, and for using said master term list and said new term list as a source of terms for adding to documents containing those terms as a meta-tag.

25. A computer program product, comprising:

a. a memory medium; and

b. a computer program stored on said memory medium, said computer program comprising instructions for extracting terms used in search queries presented to a search engine over a period of time; and for presenting those terms to said user.

26. A computer program product, comprising:

a. a memory medium; and

b. a computer program stored on said memory medium, said computer program comprising instructions for extracting terms used in search queries over a period of time, for identifying documents or files containing at least one of said terms and for selectively adding said at least one of said terms to said document or file as a meta-tag.